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ANCIENT CHAPEL
OF
TOXTETH PARK, LIVERPOOL.

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SOME ACCOUNT OF THE
ANCIENT CHAPEL
OF
TOXTETH PARK, LIVERPOOL,
FROM THE YEAR 1618 TO 1888,
AND OF ITS MINISTERS,
ESPECIALLY OF
RICHARD MATHER,
THE FIRST MINISTER.

BY
VALENTINE D. DAVIS, B.A.

LIVERPOOL:
HENRY YOUNG, 12, SOUTH CASTLE STREET.
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PREFACE.

IN the *Christian Reformer* for June, 1862, a "History of Toxteth Park Chapel" was published, by the Rev. John Robberds, B.A., minister at the time. This narrative was composed chiefly of extracts from a manuscript of the late Henry Taylor's (now the property of the Renshaw Street congregation), with additions from an unpublished popular lecture by the late Dr. Raffles, then minister of Great George Street Congregational chapel. Further particulars were added by Mr. Robberds himself, and there were several valuable notes by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, editor of the magazine.

This paper has been, throughout, the basis of my work in the following pages; but I have also consulted all the books that I was able bearing on the subject, and various congregational papers, and have tried to make my account as complete as possible.

I am indebted to several friends for help kindly given in connection with this work, and especially to the

Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., for a careful revision of the proof sheets, and to the Rev. J. Edwin Odgers, M.A., my predecessor in the pulpit of the Ancient Chapel, for a similar service, and for valuable advice as to fresh sources of information and other particulars.

V. D. DAVIS.

LIVERPOOL,
January, 1884.

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I.

THE ANCIENT CHAPEL.

Toxteth Park, which had been Crown property since the reign of King John, was in the year 1604 disparked, and came through purchase into the hands of Richard Molyneux (created a baronet in 1611), a member of the family from whom it had been formerly acquired for the king. His representatives, now Earls of Sefton, are still large owners of property in the neighbourhood.

Towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, the Park is spoken of as "waste land without inhabitants." But on the disparking of the domain a number of farmers settled on the land, and began its cultivation. These people seem to have been Puritan in their leanings, and at once gave a distinctive character to the district.*

Great changes have come over the Park during the last 280 years. In place of the farm lands of the first settlers, we now find a wilderness of small streets between the river and Park Road, and the cultivated beauty of the Prince's and Sefton Parks on the outskirts of a great city. What is now part of the long line of the Liverpool docks was, in 1604, the natural shore of the Mersey undisturbed by traffic. Only the "Dingle"

* Some trace of this may perhaps be found in the biblical names there met with. A river Jordan runs there by a farm called Jericho. Then we hear of David's Throne, a rock standing out between the two branches of the Dingle; and Adam's Buttery, a cave hard by. "The holy land" is said to have been at one time the designation of the whole district.

preserves, in part, some of the old features of the country, and now that seems to be also doomed.

But one memorial of the old time still remains in the "Ancient Chapel," which was built for those Puritan settlers, the first chapel connected with Dissent in the neighbourhood of Liverpool. The present building is not much more than a hundred years old, but it stands on the site of the former chapel, and still preserves some of its features, while the old burying-ground remains undisturbed. As we linger there, our thoughts are led back to the quiet days when there were only meadows and farm-houses all about, and perhaps a wind-mill here and there, and when the chapel was the gathering-place of the plain men who laboured there on the land, and met together on the Sabbath for rest and for instruction in things divine.

Although Puritan in their religious sympathies, the first settlers in Toxteth Park had not yet formally separated from the Establishment. The time for distinct congregations of Dissenters had not yet come. But old St. Nicholas' Church, in Liverpool, was over two miles away, and the services there were very probably not altogether according to their liking. Liverpool was at that time only part of Walton parish, but the affairs of St. Nicholas' Church were managed with almost entire independence by the municipal authorities. Their temper we may gather from the following orders of the Port Moot:—

Oct. 25, 1610.—"Item, we agree that Mr. Waynewright shall weare the S^rplus ev^y Sabothe and ev^y holiday at the tyme of Dyvine S^rvice."

"Item that he shall weare the S^rplus at all tymes that he shall meet any Corps, as well poore as riche."

October 26, 1612.—"We agree y^t the Clerke of the Church shall weare his Surplus and reade the first chapter in the body of the Churche, and lykewise shall cause his haier to be cut of a

comly and seemely length in such decent maner as best befitteth a man in his place."—Picton's *Municipal Archives and Records*, Liverpool, 1883, p. 196.

This last point would seem to indicate a Puritan leaning, and there is no doubt that there must have been many Puritans in the town at that time. But the order about the surplice is decided. And when we find afterwards that the first minister at the Park never wore a surplice during all the years he preached there, we see what the taste of the people was. They would feel freer with a chapel of their own, where they could be undisturbed in their worship, and have the services in complete harmony with their convictions.

The necessary land was granted to them by Sir Richard Molyneux, who was a Roman Catholic, and showed in this matter a liberality not often found in those days. The chapel was built (by them or by their landlord) most probably in the year 1618, at the time of the settlement of the first minister. The people had already established a school for their children. The humble little chapel was built by a stream which ran down the course of what is now Park Road, the sources of which have long since been dried up. The rising ground towards Liverpool shut out the view of the church tower and the turrets of the old castle, and it must have been a beautifully secluded spot. Even now there is a peculiar restfulness about this place, if one can put away for a moment the thought of the great city which has stretched out to include even this quiet retreat, and can call up once more a picture of its primitive surroundings.

The Ancient Chapel appears never to have been consecrated, but the early ministers were regularly ordained by the Bishop of the diocese, and, at any rate till the passing of the

Act of Uniformity, in 1662, received the tithes of the district. In the *Parliamentary Survey of Livings*,* taken in 1650, there is the following notice of the chapel:—"We also present and finde that there is in Toxteth Parke a sic chappell, called Toxteth chappell, and that Mr. Huggan is minister there, and an approved minister, and hath for his salary or maintenance the proffits of the tythes of the said towne or hamell, which we conceive to be worth cleerely ffortye-five pounds p. annum, and an additional sum of tenn pounds from Mr. Ward, rector of Walton, and that the said chappell of Toxteth Parke is farr distant from any other church or chappell, and therefore we think it very fitt to be made a parish." In the notes to Bishop Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*,† the tithes are said to have been estimated by the committee of Plundered Ministers at £60. Previous to the erection of the chapel they had been claimed by the Rector of Walton, and on the passing of the Act of Uniformity the claim was again made. During the greater part of last century, the question which had been raised as to the exemption of the district from tithes remained in abeyance, and in 1835 it was finally decided that Toxteth Park was extra-parochial, and should pay no tithes or church rates.‡

The family of the lord of the manor being Roman Catholic, would no doubt have a certain amount of fellow-feeling with their Puritan tenantry in opposition to Episcopal authority, and this may have been one reason why the congregation of the Ancient Chapel were so little disturbed in following their own manner of worship. But it is not altogether clear how the

* Lambeth MSS.

† *Notitia Cestriensis*, vol. ii., p. 172; vol. 21 of the Chetham Society's publications, 1850.

‡ Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, ii., p. 459.

original parochial chapel was suffered to subside, as it did, into a Dissenting meeting-house. During the Commonwealth time, of course it was Presbyterian, and was included in the fifth of the nine classical presbyteries into which the county of Lancaster was then by Act of Parliament divided; but after the Restoration it is not so easy to understand how the Rector of Walton should have foregone his claim to the tithes, and suffered Nonconformists to hold the chapel and its endowments. The rectory of Walton was at that time in the gift of Lord Molyneux, so that his influence may have had some effect. However that may have been, on the ejection of the famous two thousand, the minister of the Park chapel continued to preach as before, and was joined in his work, in that same year, by another of the "Unconforming." We are told by Calamy that Mr. Crompton, who then occupied the pulpit, was "some way privileged," and his colleague naturally shared in his immunity.*

After that time the chapel remained in the hands of the Dissenters, and became an acknowledged Presbyterian meeting-house. With the suppression and non-revival of the Presbyterian system in that neighbourhood, the people adopted the congregational form of church government, and, as in so many other instances throughout the country, by the gradual unfolding of their thought, became Unitarian in their theology. Those who did not sympathise with the change seceded, and helped to found other congregations.

Further details of the history of the chapel will be more conveniently given later on in speaking of the succession of its ministers. In passing now to the story of the first minister, I shall enter into considerable detail, such as will not be possible

* Palmer's *Nonconformist Memorial*, 1775, ed. ii., p. 106.

with any of his successors. But, from the great interest of the subject, I imagine that no apology is needed for what may seem a wide digression, and a certain want of proportion in the narrative.

II.

RICHARD MATHER, THE FIRST MINISTER.*

The first minister of the Ancient Chapel was Richard Mather, a man well known in his own day among the Puritans on both sides of the Atlantic. He was an early follower of the

* Our chief authority for the following narrative of Mather's life is a little book published in 1670, at Cambridge, Mass., entitled "The Life and Death of that Reverend Man of God, *Mr. Richard Mather*, Teacher of the Church in Dorchester, in New-England." The writer was a personal friend, who desired that his name should be withheld; but he had access to all Mather's papers and every means of accurate knowledge. There is a dedication by Increase Mather to the Church and Inhabitants of Dorchester, giving these facts as to the author. This Life was reprinted in 1850, at Boston, for the Dorchester Anti-quarian and Historical Society, together with the *Journal of Richard Mather*, 1635, and forms No. 3 of the Society's Collections.

All subsequent accounts are really based on this, the chief being that in Dr. Samuel Clark's *Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age*, London, 1683, published after the author's death, with an Address to the Reader by Richard Baxter, and that in Dr. Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana: Ecclesiastical History of New England, 1620-1698*, published in London in 1702. This last contains a few fresh particulars as to Mather's life, added by the grandson; and the interesting paper given below (p.), but for the rest is merely an abridgement of the first biography, from which it differs chiefly in its more extravagant style and greater affectation of learning. For Mather's life in America, see also J. G. Palfrey's *History of New England under the Stuart Dynasty*, Boston, 1858, &c., and H. M. Dexter's *Congregationalism of the last 300 Years*, New York, 1880.

Pilgrim Fathers, and the head of a family which, through successive generations in this country and in New England, gave several earnest men to the Christian ministry. Of these the most noted were Dr. Increase Mather, his youngest son, President of Haryard College, and faithful servant of his state in an important diplomatic mission to the old country, and his grandson, Dr. Cotton Mather, the learned historian of the churches of New England, a most prolific author, and less pleasantly notorious for the part he took in the cruel persecution of supposed witches.*

* Of Richard Mather's sons, three others besides Increase became ministers. Samuel and Nathaniel, the two eldest, who were nine and five years old respectively when they crossed the Atlantic, after graduating at Harvard, returned to England. Samuel studied at Oxford, and then went with Henry Cromwell to Ireland. Afterwards, having become minister of a little chapel at Burton Wood, he was in 1662 ejected, when he returned to Dublin, and preached there till his death, in 1671. He was succeeded by his brother Nathaniel, who had previously been ejected, in 1662, from Barnstaple, and had then ministered to an English congregation in Rotterdam. Nathaniel's closing years were spent in London, where he died in 1697, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. The third son who entered the ministry, Eleazar, was born at Dorchester, in 1637, and was minister at Northampton, in the Connecticut valley, where he died in the same year as his father.

Increase, the youngest son, above alluded to, was born in 1639, and, after graduating at Harvard, and at Trinity College, Dublin, and preaching in various places in England, returned to Boston, where he preached till his death, in 1723. He was, however, absent in England on a political errand for more than three years, between 1688 and 1692, having been sent by the patriotic party in Boston to make representations to the King respecting the tyranny of Governor Sir Edmund Andros. Before his return, the revolution in England brought with it the revolt of Massachusetts, and William restored the old privileges to New England.

Increase Mather had a large family. One of his sons settled in

Richard Mather was born in the year 1596, at Lowton, a village in the parish of Winwick, in the county of Lancaster, two miles from Warrington. His parents were both of ancient family, but, "by reason of some unhappy mortgages, they were reduced into a low condition as to the world." Nevertheless, they were bent on giving their son a good education, and therefore sent him to the Winwick grammar-school, four miles distant from his home. In winter he was boarded at Winwick, but in summer, "such was his desire after knowledge" that he walked over every day.

The boy does not seem to have been very happy at school, for though the master had an excellent faculty for teaching, and

England as a minister, but died young; and another, the famous Cotton Mather, is mentioned above. He was also a minister in Boston, first as his father's assistant, and then as sole pastor of the Second Church, and took part in the revolt of Massachusetts during the latter's absence in England. He died in 1728. His son Samuel, following the same profession, lived till 1785.

Old Richard Mather had two other sons, who did not enter the ministry; one of these, Timothy, had a son Samuel, who was a minister at Windsor, Connecticut, and died 1726. A grandson of this Samuel, Allen by name, died at Savannah in 1784, having been formerly settled with the church at New Haven.

Finally, there was another great-great-grandson of the old patriarch's, the Rev. Moses Mather, of Darien, Connecticut (descended from son Timothy), who survived till 1806. Other branches of the family were very numerous. In 1848, a certain John Mather, of Manchester, Connecticut, published the genealogy of the various branches in America, to the tenth generation.

There were Mathers connected with the Ancient Chapel till quite recently (see p. 51), but there is no direct evidence that they belonged to the same family. It has been conjectured, however, that as they were settled in the neighbourhood before Richard Mather's appointment there, it may have been through their suggestion that inquiries were made at Winwick, and their relative finally chosen. But there is no hint of this in the "Life."

sent up many of his scholars to Oxford and Cambridge, "he was very severe and partial in his discipline;" and young Mather felt this so much, that he begged his father to take him from school and let him follow some other calling. His father, however, induced him to persevere; but he never forgot that early experience, and though grateful that his father did not indulge his wish, we find long afterwards some traces of his feeling in the matter, when he writes:—"O that all school-masters would learn wisdom, moderation, and equity towards their scholars, and seek rather to win the hearts of the children by righteous, loving, and courteous usage, than to alienate their minds by partiality and undue severity, which had been my utter undoing, had not the good providence of God and the wisdom and authority of my father prevented."

In the year 1611 the people of Toxteth Park had determined to establish a school for their children, and sent to the master of Winwick grammar-school to ask him to recommend a teacher to them. He at once proposed to the Mathers that their son should undertake the duty, and though the boy had now set his heart on going to Oxford, the offer was accepted, and, at the age of fifteen, Richard Mather left his father's home, and was soon established over the new school. "The Lord helped him in those his young days," we read in the Life, "to carry it with such wisdom and love and gravity amongst his scholars as was to admiration, so as that he was by them both loved and feared, beyond what is usual, even where there are aged masters." No doubt his own hard experience at school helped him into the right way. The fame of the school spread, and children were sent from some distance to be under his charge. Being called to teach so early, "he became a more accurate grammarian than divines usually are,"

and at the same time he carried on his own studies in logic, rhetoric, and theology.

He had fallen into good hands. He lodged with a Mr. Edward Aspinwall, a landowner of that district, "a learned and religious gentleman." Through the influence of this man, and the preaching of a Mr. Harrison, of Huyton, and the reading of a book by Mr. Perkins, showing "how far a reprobate may go" (in religion—and yet be damned!), he was first led to think seriously of the condition of his life. After some inward struggles, he found peace and confidence in believing, having learnt "to apply the precious promises of the Gospel to his soul." The date of his conversion is set down in the year 1614.

After teaching school for some years, he determined to go up to Oxford for the better pursuing of his own studies, and so he entered at Brasenose College. It was pleasant to meet there many of his old scholars, whom he had prepared for the university, and he took great pleasure in the lectures and disputations, and the intercourse with learned men which there opened to him; "but his heart being afore this touched with the fear of God, the great superstition and profaneness which he was forced there to behold, was no small grief unto him."

"But before he had spent so much time in Oxford as he could have wished that he might have done, the people in Toxteth, whose children had been taught by him, sent to him, desiring that he would return unto them to instruct not so much their children as themselves, and that not in mere humane literature, but in the things of God." This call, after due consideration, he accepted, and returned to Toxteth in the autumn of 1618, where, on November 30th, he preached his first sermon. "There was a very great concourse of people to hear him, and his labours were highly accepted of by the

judicious. Such was the vastness of his memory, as that the things which he had prepared and intended to deliver at once contained no less than six long sermons." Whether he actually delivered all at once what he had prepared we are not told.*

It was probably in this year that the Ancient Chapel was built for the congregation that gathered about Richard Mather. An account of his ordination and settlement is given in the following extract from the Life:—"The people having had some taste of his gifts, were the more importunate in their desires that he might continue amongst them. And because that could not be without Episcopal Ordination, they urged him to accept thereof. Not having at that time so thoroughly

* That such a thing is not impossible, we learn from other records of early Puritan days. Mr. Tayler, in his *Retrospect of the Religious Life of England* (p. 182, note), quotes the following instances:—

"He told me," says Calamy (*Life of Howe*, p. 5), "it was upon those occasions (times of fast) his common way, to begin about nine in the morning with a prayer for about a quarter of an hour, in which he begged a blessing on the work of the day; and afterwards read and expounded a chapter or psalm, in which he spent about three quarters; then prayed for an hour, preached for another hour, and prayed for about half an hour. After this he retired, and took some little refreshment for about a quarter of an hour or more (the people singing all the while), and then came again into the pulpit, and prayed for another hour, and gave them another sermon of about an hour's length: and so concluded the service of the day, at about four of the clock in the evening, with about half an hour or more in prayer."

And in Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, 1644 (vol. ii., p. 184), there is a similar description of how a fast was kept; how they spent "from nine to five very graciously," when, after a brief introductory prayer, "Mr. Marshall prayed large two houres, most divinellie—in a wonderfullie pathetick and prudent way," and during the day there were several other prayers and sermons ranging from one to two hours each in length!

looked into that part of ceremonious conformity as afterwards, he yielded unto the motion, and accordingly was ordained with many others on the same day, by Dr. Morton, then Bishop of Chester, after the mode of those times. The ordination being over, the Bishop singled out Mr. Mather from amongst the rest, saying, 'I have something to say to you, between you and me alone.' Mr. Mather was then afraid lest some informations might have been given in to the Bishop against him, because of his Puritanism, thereby to prejudice him. But it happened to be otherwise; for when the Bishop had him alone, 'I have,' saith he, 'an earnest request unto you, and you must not deny me; it is that you would pray for me; for I know (said he) the prayers of men that fear God will avail much, and you, I believe, are such an one.'"

Afterwards, this ordination by the Bishop was a weight upon his conscience, though from the very first he went no further in conformity. But years afterwards, when one of his sons, noticing a torn parchment in his study, asked what it was, he replied that it was what he received at his ordination; "And (said he) I tore it, because I took no pleasure in keeping a monument of my sin and folly in submitting to that superstition, the very remembrance whereof is grievous unto me."

Soon after his settlement at Toxteth, he became a suitor for the hand of Katherine, daughter of Edmund Houlst, Esq., of Bury, in Lancashire, who had deservedly the repute of "a very godly and prudent maid." For several years the father refused his consent, because of his dislike for "Nonconformable Puritans," but on September 29th, 1624, they were married, and she "became a rich blessing unto him" for over thirty years.

After his marriage he removed to Much-Woolton, three

miles from Toxteth, where he had bought a house, but continued to preach twice every Sunday at Toxteth, and once a fortnight "kept a lecture" at Prescot. And he often preached on holidays, because then there was an opportunity of getting many hearers, and "it is good casting the net where there is much fish," and at funerals also, though many Puritans objected to this as savouring of Popery. But on such occasions his speech was not taken up with praising the dead, but with instructing the living concerning death and its solemn lessons. We learn from the municipal records that he was not a stranger either to the Liverpool pulpit. In 1629, the Mayor and Corporation petitioned the Bishop of Chester that as Liverpool was a market town, a place of great resort, "many papists inhabiting thereabouts," they might institute monthly sermons to be held on some week-day. And when this was granted, and the arrangements for the preachers were made, Richard Mather, at the request of the Mayor, undertook the sermons for April and August.*

During the fifteen years of his ministry at Toxteth, Mather became well known throughout that part of the country, especially the lecture at Prescot increasing his reputation; and it was not likely that so thorough a Nonconformist, who "all that time had never worn a surplice," should remain altogether unmolested. In the year 1638 complaints were made against him to the Bishop, and he was suspended. But after four months, "through the intercession of some gentlemen," he was restored again to his public ministry. After this he was led to consider more fully the subject of church discipline, and he treated of it also in his ministry, arriving at the conclusion that the Congregational was the right principle of church govern-

* Picton's *Municipal Archives and Records*, Liverpool, 1883, p. 200.

ment, and that neither the Episcopalian nor the Presbyterian system was based on Scripture.*

His restoration to the ministry of the Ancient Chapel was not destined, however, to be of long duration. For, in the year following, Neal, Archbishop of York, sent his Visitors into Lancashire, and Mather, having been summoned to attend their court at Wigan, was again suspended for his nonconformity; and this time no intercession of his friends might prevail.

Of his encounter with the Visitors, he writes as follows in his diary :—" In the passages of that day, I have this to bless the name of God for, that the terror of their threatening words, of their pursevants and of the rest of their pomp, did not terrify my mind, but that I could stand before them without being daunted in the least measure, but answered for myself such words of truth and soberness as the Lord put into my mouth, not being afraid of their faces at all; which supporting and comforting presence of the Lord I count not much less mercy than if I had been altogether preserved out of their hands."

III.

RICHARD MATHER'S SETTLEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND.

At the time of Richard Mather's final suspension, the Puritans had already found a refuge from persecution on the other side of the Atlantic. It was fourteen years after the

* After his removal to America, he engaged in some controversy on this subject, and was instrumental in formulating the principles of the New England Churches. (See pp. 20, 21 and 23.)

Pilgrim Fathers had landed from the *Mayflower* on Plymouth Rock, and established the first of the New England colonies, and many others had followed since then. There were already settlements in Massachusetts; Boston had been founded four years before.

It was therefore not unnatural that Mather, being hindered from the exercise of his ministry in this country, should turn his thoughts that way, and consider whether he also was not called to seek the greater liberty of the new settlement. He pondered the matter long, and drew up a statement of the reasons which impelled him to go. He considered that "for them that are not otherwise tied but free," it is right to remove from a corrupt church to a purer, where there is no persecution,* but freedom to enjoy all the ordinances of God, and the discipline of Christ, and where ministers are at liberty to exercise their proper function. He also held that the calamities which were evidently impending over his unhappy country, were an additional warning to those who were able to flee.

These reasons were submitted to several meetings of "godly ministers and other Christians in Lancashire," and he was also greatly strengthened in his purpose by letters received from Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker, who were already settled in New England. The latter of them wrote: "If I may speak my own thoughts fully and freely, though there are very many places where men may receive and expect more earthly commodities,

* That is to say, where they would be free to establish *their* churches, not that any thought of universal toleration entered their minds as practicable or even desirable. The Congregational churches of New England were, from the first (with exception, perhaps, of the actual Pilgrims), altogether intolerant, not only of Episcopalians and Baptists and Quakers, but even of the Presbyterians.

yet I do believe there is no place this day upon the face of the earth where a gracious heart and a judicious head may receive more spiritual good to himself and do more temporal and spiritual good to others."

His people at Toxteth were devoted to him, and very loath to let him go, but there seemed no hope of his being able to renew his ministry with them, and at last it was clear to them as to himself, that it was a divine call which impelled him; so he determined to delay no longer. "His parting with his people and friends in Lancashire was like St. Paul's taking his leave of Ephesus, with much sorrow, many tears being shed by those that expected to see his face no more in this world." The strength of the attachment of his old friends is shown by the fact that after the establishment of the Commonwealth, when the Puritans once more had liberty in this country, they urgently begged him to return to them. But he was already too firmly rooted in the new country, and remained there till his death. Two of his sons, however, did return, and became ministers, not without distinction in their day.*

THE VOYAGE.

There is a most interesting journal of Richard Mather's,† describing his voyage to America, which gives us delightful glimpses into the conditions of travelling in those days, and the spirit in which the immediate successors of the Pilgrim Fathers undertook that so perilous adventure.

* See note on p. 7.

† First published in 1846, among the *Chronicles of the First Planters of Massachusetts Bay, from 1623-1636*, by Alexander Young, Boston, Massachusetts, and in 1850 again reprinted for the Dorchester Anti-quarian and Historical Society. (See p. 6, note.)

In April, 1685, Mather left Lancashire with his wife and young children (one an infant lately born), and journeyed down to Bristol, where they were to embark. In the various lives of Mather, it is stated that he was obliged to travel in disguise, "because pursevants were designed to apprehend him;" but in the Journal he makes no mention of this. They had a month to wait at Bristol, and when they did go on board their ship, the *James*, on May 23rd, she was by no means ready to start, "many goods being not stowed, but lying all disordered in heaps here and there in the ship." That day two of the Searchers came on board and viewed the list of their names, and administered the oath of allegiance to all of full age, and examined the certificates from the ministers in the parishes whence they came, and gave them licences to pass the seas.

It was not till June 4th that they actually started, after many delays caused by contrary winds and the dilatoriness of the captain and sailors. The *James* sailed in company with the *Angel Gabriel*, also bound for New England, and at first also with three other ships bound for Newfoundland. The next eighteen days, because of contrary winds, were spent along the coast, and only on June 22nd did they finally sail from Milford Haven, and with a strong easterly gale were soon out of sight of land.

Nearly seven weeks they sailed till they again sighted land at Manhegin Island, and then, after a slow progress along the American coast towards the south, landed in Boston on Monday, August 17th, having been twelve weeks and two days with their ship.

It was a prosperous voyage for the *James*. After the first twelve days on the open sea she left the *Angel Gabriel*, which was a slow sailer, and proceeded alone. And there was, on the

whole, fair weather, except that on August 3rd, a few days before they sighted the American coast, there was a sharp storm before daybreak, which, however, did not last long ; and on August 15th, when they were off the Isles of Shoals, another storm far more vehement, in which they were in great danger because of the rocky coast. They lost their three anchors and cables, their sails were rent in pieces "as if they had been but rotten rags," and they seemed to be driving straight on a great rock that stood up above the waters. But, happily, though they had lost all control of their ship, they escaped the peril of the rocks ; the storm abated ; they had leisure to fit the ship with other sails, and so proceeded on their way.

In that storm the *Angel Gabriel*, anchored off Pemmaquid, was wrecked, and one of the sailors and three or four of the passengers, together with all the cattle and goods, were lost. The only casualty on board the *James* was an accident to Richard Becon, who, lending a hand to the sailors in the hauling in of a cable, got his right arm entangled and crushed in pieces, and his hand torn away. But for this they all landed safely at Boston, they and their cattle, though there were twenty-three seamen and one hundred passengers on board.

"It was very delightful," Mather says, "while we took pleasure and instruction in beholding the works and wonders of the Almighty in the deep ; the sea sometimes being rough with mighty mountains and deep valleys, sometimes being plain and smooth like a level meadow, and sometimes painted with a variety of yellow weeds. Besides, it was a pleasant thing to behold the variety of fowls and mighty fishes, swimming and living in the waters." And again, "It was comfortable to us, by means of the fellowship of divers godly Christians in the ship, and by means of our constant serving God morning and

evening every day, the daily duties being performed one day by Mr. Maud,* another by myself, and the Sabbath's exercises divided (for the most part) equally betwixt us two."

IN NEW ENGLAND.

Boston, in 1635, was not the home of liberty and toleration, as we understand those terms to-day. It was the home of a Congregational Church, that had gathered in this new country to be free from the corruptions and the persecutions of the Episcopalians. It was there to have its own way, not to tolerate any other. The church *was* the state. At the outset, they had decided that church-membership must be the first condition of citizenship in their colony. In that very year, Roger Williams, of Salem, was expelled the territory, because he claimed greater individual liberty, and so threatened the cohesion and unity of their struggling society. Mrs. Hutchinson and her champion Wheelwright were already in Boston, and were soon to raise more vehement contention in the church, with their plea for the "covenant of grace," and their complaint that most of the ministers walked only in the "covenant of works," till they also were condemned and banished. Baptists and Quakers had not yet appeared in Massachusetts, but during the next thirty years the most cruel laws of repression were enacted, and at least four Quakers, one of them a woman, were put to death.

It was fortunate for Richard Mather, therefore, that he was for the "congregational way," so that on landing at Boston he was able at once to join the church, and be enrolled a citizen.

* Afterwards schoolmaster in Boston, and from 1643 till his death, in 1655, minister at Dover, N. H.

He and his friends received a very hearty welcome, and before long there came to Mather more than one invitation from churches in the neighbourhood. He ultimately settled at Dorchester, now a suburb of Boston, but then a distinct settlement, where there was an open field of labour for him, for the church which had been first gathered there had just removed with Mr. Warham to a new settlement in the Connecticut valley.

At Dorchester he laboured for nearly thirty-four years, in the course of which his wife died, and after a year and a half he married the widow of his old friend, Dr. John Cotton, who had died in 1652. His influence steadily increased, not only with his own people, but in all the country round about, and he became one of the patriarchs of the district, being much sought after at all conferences of the churches, by reason of his wide knowledge and genial disposition. He was the close friend of some of the leading men in the colony, and by his writings was able to render them valuable service.

When the brethren in England were anxious to know of the condition of the new churches across the Atlantic, it was he who wrote, in 1689, *An answer of the Elders of the several Churches in New England, unto nine Propositions sent over to them (by divers Reverend and Godly Ministers in England) to declare their judgements therein*, and also *Church Government and Church Covenant*, in answer to thirty-two questions, tracts which were approved by his brother ministers in Massachusetts, and published in their name in London, in 1648. In 1644, in conjunction with a Mr. Thompson, he wrote an answer to a book of Charles Herle's (a Lancashire minister),* *Against the Independency of Churches*, and in 1647, *A Reply to Mr. Samuel*

* Of Winwick, Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly.

Rutherford, who had commented on the answer to Herle from the Presbyterian point of view. These also were published in London.

Then, in 1648, when the Cambridge Synod was held, owing to some threatened agitation for the introduction of the Presbyterian rule into the New England churches, his draft of a statement of principles was adopted in preference to those of Dr. Cotton and another, and, as the *Cambridge Platform*, became the basis of the New England church polity for many years.*

A treatise on Justification, and a defence of the action of the Massachusetts Synod of 1662, concerning Baptism and Church Membership, were also among his controversial works. In 1640, he shared with Welde and Eliot the labour of producing a metrical version of the Psalms, known as the Bay Psalm Book, and for a long time widely used in the churches; and, towards the close of his life, he wrote and published a Farewell Exhortation to his people in Dorchester and to his old friends in England.

This list of works is in all probability not complete, but it shows at least that he was not idle in his new home, though, as an author, he cannot be compared (at any rate in the quantity of his books) with his son Increase, and his grandson Cotton.

Richard Mather was a man of robust constitution, and, till the close of his life, suffered from no acute sickness; so that during fifty years he was not prevented from preaching on a single Sunday through ill-health. But towards the end he grew deaf, and seven years before his death lost the sight of one eye. Then, during the last two years, he suffered from stone,

* See Dexter's *Congregationalism of the last 300 years*.

"that scourge of students," which was at last the cause of his death.

On April the 13th, 1669, he had been presiding in Boston at a council of neighbouring churches,* and was staying for a few days with his son Increase, who was established there as a minister. But on April 16th he was taken suddenly ill, and so next morning returned to Dorchester, where, on the evening of April 22nd, he died.

He had preached with vigour ten days before his death, and on the very morning recognised his son, though his power of speech was then almost gone. He suffered much, but never murmured, and when they asked him how he did, would reply, "Far from well, yet far better than my iniquities deserve." He took much delight in reading Dr. Goodwin's *Patience and its Perfect Work*, in which book he read till the very day of his death.

IV.

CHARACTER OF RICHARD MATHER.

If we cannot count Richard Mather among the most distinguished men of his time, we must yet acknowledge that his force of character, his earnest and truly devout disposition, his genial temper, blended as they were with a life-history by no

* This was the council or synod which was called to consider the question of baptism and church membership, in connection with a secession from the Second Church at Boston, and the foundation of the Third or Old South Church. The First Church had condemned the secession, but the synod approved.

means unremarkable, deserve to be remembered. He was one of many noble-hearted Puritans of that day, who stood bravely for the truth as they conceived it; and if there were others more remarkable for intellectual gifts and of wider influence, there were none whose record was more blameless, and over whose story we can linger with more unalloyed pleasure.

There was no originality in his thought. In doctrine he was perfectly orthodox. The *Cambridge Platform*, which may be taken as representing his position in these matters, as well as that of the other fathers of the New England churches, made no fresh definitions of theological truth, but was content to refer to the recent Confession of Faith of the Westminster divines.

In matters of worship and discipline, his biographer says, Mather was "for the true congregational way, between the two extremes of Presbyterianism and Brownism." The title "Brownist" he with others vigorously disclaimed, and he agreed with Dr. Cotton in thinking the name Independent "too strait," because they *were* dependent on Christ and his word, and, in a sense, on the civil power for protection, and on their churches and synods for help and advice. "Congregational" was the term they chose, as most clearly describing their position.

Each congregation was in itself a church, over which the only authority was Christ and his word in Scripture. A synod of churches had no power of coercive discipline, but was useful for taking counsel in difficult times, and for deciding matters of doctrine; it might fitly advise and admonish a congregation, and, in extreme cases, even withhold fellowship and countenance from an offending church; but authority in the Presbyterian sense it had none. The power of admitting church

members and of excommunication, as also the choice and ordination of ministers, rested with each separate church. A synod must not be stated, as with the Presbyterians, but occasional, as there was need. Its judgments could only be carried into effect where the churches chose to accept its guidance.*

Such was Mather's view of the right constitution of churches and their relation to one another. In all his arguments in such matters, the word of Scripture was the final authority to which he appealed.

He had considerable knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs, which made him a weighty controversialist for those times. "He was the pattern of all answerers in the world," said old Mr. Higginson, of Salem. His tone in controversy was quiet and friendly, not seeking to emphasise the differences over which they contended, "for I had rather bring prayers and tears," he said, in his reply to Rutherford, "for the quenching of such fires, than fuel or oil for the increasing thereof. For I believe there is more hope of doing good by solidity of argument with the spirit of meekness and love, than by sharp and tart language, the fruit of bitterness of spirit, wherein, for the most part, right of reason is wanting, the passions being there most vehement and stirring, where the intellectuals are most feeble and weak."

Such a temper in controversy was only too rare at that time, and might lead us to hope that the extreme severity of the authorities in Massachusetts, to all those whom their church regarded as heretics, was distasteful to his feeling. There is, however, no trace of any protest on his part, though during his lifetime the cruel persecution of the Baptists took

* See Dexter's *Congregationalism of the last 300 years*.

place, and members of that "cursed sect of heretics," the Quakers, were publicly put to death. Possibly the supposed political necessity in the new colony, which, before all things, needed unity, induced him to acquiesce.

He was a hard student, being very diligent in his preparations for the pulpit, and, to the last, keeping up his interest in the anything but light literature of the churches on both sides of the Atlantic. The very morning before he died he begged his friends to help him into his study, and when he found that it was of no use, he was distressed at the thought of losing so much time.

The character of Mather's preaching may best be seen from the following extract from the Life :—

" His way of preaching was plain, aiming to shoot his arrows not over his people's heads, but into their hearts and consciences. Whence he studiously avoided obscure phrases, exotic words, or an unnecessary citation of Latin sentences, which some men addict themselves to the use of. The Lord gave him an excellent faculty in making abstruse things plain, that in handling the deepest mysteries he would accommodate himself to vulgar capacities, that even the meanest might learn something.

" He was mighty in the Scriptures: whence Mr. Hooker would say of him, ' My brother Mather is a mighty man.' Also, his usual way of delivery was very powerful, awakening and zealous, especially in his younger years, there being few men of so great strength of body as he, which, together with his natural fervour of spirit, being sanctified, made his ministry the more powerful. And the Lord went forth with his labours to the conversion of many, both in England and in New England. Yet, though his way of preaching was plain and zealous, it was moreover substantial and very judicious. Even in his beginning times, Mr. Gillebrand (a famous minister in Lancashire, and the more famous for that though he did exceedingly stammer in his ordinary discourse, he would pray and preach as fluently as any man), once having heard

him preach, asked what his name might be? And answer being made that his name was Mather; Nay, said Mr. Gillebrand, call him Matter, for believe it, this man hath substance in him."

There is an interesting paper preserved in Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* (Book iii., p. 127), drawn up by Richard Mather, June 21st, 1698, containing a number of resolutions which he had made for the guidance of his own life, and earnestly renewed on his going to New England, when the paper was again dated, June 15, 1696. Here we get an additional glimpse into the character of the man, who was "exceeding low and little in his own eyes," and with this, our notice of the first minister of the Ancient Chapel may fitly close :—

I.—*Touching the Ministry.*

To be more painful and diligent in private preparations for preaching, by reading, meditation and prayer; and not slightly and superficially

In and after preaching, to strive seriously against inward pride and vain-glory.

Before and after preaching, to beg by prayer the Lord's blessing on his word for the good of souls more carefully than in the past.

II.—*Touching the Family.*

To be more frequent in religious discourse and talk.

To be more careful in catechising children. And, therefore, to bestow some pains this way every week once; and, if by urgent occasions it be sometimes omitted, to do it twice as much another week.

III.—*Touching Myself.*

To strive more against worldly cares and fears and against the inordinate love of earthly things.

To be more frequent and constant in private prayer.

To practise more carefully and seriously and frequently the duty of self-examination, especially before receiving the Lord's supper.

To strive against carnal security and excessive sleeping.

To strive against vain jangling and misspending precious time.

IV.—*Touching Others.*

To be careful and zealous to do good unto their souls by private exhortation, reproofs, instruction, conferences of God's word.

To be ready to do offices of love and kindness, not only or principally for the praise of men, to purchase commendation for a good neighbour, but rather out of conscience to the commandment of God.

V.

SUBSEQUENT MINISTERS OF THE ANCIENT
CHAPEL.

After Richard Mather's departure for New England, a few years passed during which we have no record of the fortunes of the Tooteth congregation. It is not unlikely that the vigilance of the Archbishop's visitors prevented for some time the appointment of a minister after their own mind, and that in those days were held the secret meetings for worship in the Dingle, of which there is a tradition.

The cause of Puritanism, however, was destined soon to be in the ascendant. Towards the close of 1642, the Long Parliament ordered the committee of Plundered Ministers to arrange for the support and appointment of ministers who had been plundered by the Royalist forces, and in the records of their work preserved at Lambeth we read that the tithes of Tooteth, valued at £60, were allowed to "Mr. Thomas Huggins, an honest man and a graduate."* This committee sat for several

* See Gastrell's *Notitia Cestriensis*, ii., p. 172, note.

years, so that we cannot tell when Mr. Huggins was appointed, but in 1650 he was still there, when the Parliamentary Survey of Livings was made, in which he appears as Mr. Huggan, "an approved minister." (See p. 4.)

Next upon the roll of ministers of Toxteth Chapel comes Thomas Crompton, who was born at Great Leaver in 1635, brought up in Manchester School, and graduated at Oxford University. From Calamy's account of the ejected ministers we learn that Mr. Crompton, "a man of excellent ready parts and good education," though in no way conforming to the requirements of the new Act, "continued to enjoy the liberty of the public chapel, being some way privileged."* In 1662 he was joined in the ministry of the chapel by Mr. Michael Briscoe, of Trinity College, Dublin (born in 1619), who had just been ejected from Walmsley Chapel. The committee of plundered ministers had appointed Briscoe to the curacy of Turton, near Bolton, but though a "godly minister," he offended some of the people there, and in 1650 the congregation elected another man, while he passed on to the congregation at Walmsley, in the same township, where the committee ordered a payment to him of £40 a year.†

In 1651 he received an invitation from the Liverpool Corporation to become joint minister with Mr. Peter Stanynough, at St. Nicholas' Church ("during their good demeanour only, and until further order in this behalf," the minute of the Corporation says), but both men declined the offer.‡ Of Briscoe, Calamy says: "He was a good scholar and a fine orator. His sermons

* Palmer's *Nonconformist Memorial*, ed. 1775, ii., p. 106.

† Lambeth MSS., vol. 2, *Notitia Cestriensis*, ii., p. 23, note.

‡ See Pierson's *Municipal Archives and Records*, Liverpool, 1883, p. 205.

were judicious, but his voice was low, which was more than compensated by his pleasing delivery.* In 1659, Briscoe had been one of seven Independent ministers who, with fourteen Presbyterians, signed a set of propositions of agreement, which were the first of their kind, aiming to unite the two denominations.† The political excitement of the time immediately following prevented this attempt at union from having any practical results, and it was not till 1698 that the Lancashire ministers, following the lead of the "United Brethren" in London, formed themselves into a provincial union. But what at that time could not be carried out for the whole county, Briscoe effected in his own case by joining peaceably with the Presbyterian Crompton in the ministry at Toxteth Park. The two men preached on alternate Sundays, and in 1672, after the Declaration of Indulgence, each took out a licence in connection with the chapel for his own denomination. Mr. Briscoe died at Toxteth in September, 1685, aged 66.

Of Thomas Crompton we can add one or two particulars. In 1668 we find him visiting Henry Newcome, in Manchester, and in Newcome's autobiography, under June 1, 1666, we read: "Mr. Crompton was angry at something I said to him, wherein I did not bear with his melancholy temper as I might have done; and when I talked to him seriously about his being so averse from preaching when now he had liberty, when we had

* Palmer's *Nonconformist Memorial*, ed. 1775, ii., p. 108.

† Halley's *Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, 1869, ii., p. 87. Among the other ministers who signed were John Angier, of Denton, and Henry Newcome, of Manchester. They agreed to preach in one another's pulpits, and to meet occasionally for advice. Any case of offence should be decided by a meeting of delegates from both sides. Their desire for real union was expressed in the following clause: "We also agree that we will lay to heart all our unnecessary distances and unbrotherly carriages."

not, he said I was serious now, and at other times as light as a chip." It is not certain, however, that this latter reference is to the minister of Toxteth, for there was another Thomas Crompton in Lancashire, "a very self-denying, mortified man," who, after being ejected from Astley Chapel,* in Leigh parish, near Tyldesley, continued to preach there for seven or eight years, so that perhaps he is more likely to be the friend to whom Newcome refers. It was curious that there should be two Thomas Cromptons privileged to carry on their ministry while so many others were prevented. But so it was. Crompton, of Astley, died in 1691, aged 82, so that when in the records of the provincial meetings of Lancashire ministers we find Thomas Crompton preaching at Warrington, April 9, 1695, and again at Manchester, August 10, 1698, it was the minister at Toxteth Park.

Mr. Crompton was also acquainted with Oliver Heywood, who, in April, 1678, visiting a relative in Liverpool, preached twice at the Park Chapel, and mentions seeing Mr. Briscoe and Mr. Crompton.†

In 1695, on the death of Mr. Baldwin, the former minister, Crompton removed to Eccles, but was not long there, for in September, 1699, he died at Manchester, aged 64.

Before his removal to Eccles he had been joined in the ministry at Toxteth Park by Christopher Richardson. This would be most likely soon after Mr. Briscoe's death in 1685. Richardson was one of the ejected of 1662, having been deprived of the living of Kirk Heaton, in Yorkshire. At that time he retired to his own house at Lassell Hall, preaching there every Sunday, and once a month holding a lecture, in

* Calamy calls it Ashby by mistake.

† Hunter's *Life of Oliver Heywood*, p. 288.

which he was joined by neighbouring ministers. When he went to Liverpool he preached once a fortnight in Toxteth Chapel, and the alternate Sunday in town. "His preaching," says Calamy, "was to the last very neat and accurate, but plain and popular. . . . He was a man mighty in the Scriptures, being able on a sudden to analyse and draw useful observations from any chapter he read in any of the pious families into which he came. When he lived in Yorkshire his preaching was much followed. A neighbouring minister, whose parishioners used to go to hear him, complaining once to him that he drew away his flock, Mr. Richardson answered: 'Feed them better, and they will not stray.'" Calamy also mentions that he had "an healthful constitution, which continued till old age," and that he died in December, 1698, aged about 80.*

In a chapel register, kept by Samuel Angier, of Dukinfield, from 1677 to 1718, there is the following entry:—"Mmd. Mr. Richard . . . of Liverpool, aged 89 years, died in November 1698," which will have been Richardson, and gives us the more exact age and date of death than Calamy.†

Besides sharing the duty at Toxteth Park, as mentioned above, Richardson ministered to the first congregation of Dissenters in Liverpool itself, who most probably, during his sojourn with them, built their first chapel in Castle Hey (now called Harrington Street). All trace of this chapel has disappeared. On Richardson's death the ministry of the two chapels was separated, Richard Holt succeeding him at Castle Hey.‡

* *Palmer's Memorial*, ii., 565.

† See *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, vol. 33, 1881.

‡ See David Thom, *Liverpool Churches and Chapels*, 1854, p. 66. In 1727 the Castle Hey congregation moved to Benn's Garden, where,

Before passing on to Mr. Richardson's successors at Tortex Park, there is another name which must be mentioned, though whether of another minister of the chapel is not certain.

In Samuel Angier's Dukinfield Register, before mentioned (p. 81), there is this entry: "1698, Feb. 20th. Mr. Samuel Angier, of Tortex Park, minister of ye Gospel, died Feb. 20, was buried Wednesday, ye 28rd." And in Oliver Heywood's diary we read: "1697-8. Mr. Samuel Angier, my nephew, a N.C. minister of Liverpool, was buried Wednesday, Feb. 28, aged 40."

Again, in the Dukinfield Register, is the following: "May 7, 1700. I heard that William, son of Cousin Samuel Angier, of Tortex, deceased, and Rebecca, his now widow, was dead, falling into a well the 14 of Aprill, being Sab. evening, when his mother was catechising the rest of her children, which is the fifth breach amongst the relations of that family in a short time."

From this it seems clear that this Samuel Angier lived at Tortex, and that the family remained there after his early from 1763, Dr. William Enfield ministered till his removal to the Warrington Academy in 1770.

In 1811, during the ministry of the Rev. Robert Lewin, the congregation again moved to a new chapel in Renshaw Street, when on the afternoon of the opening day a sermon was preached by the Rev. John Grundy, of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, afterwards of Paradise Street, Liverpool. Mr. Lewin died in 1825, and was buried in the Ancient Chapel burying-ground.

He had resigned the Renshaw Street pulpit in 1816, and was succeeded by the following ministers:—Rev. George Harris, 1817-22. Rev. William Hincks, 1822-27, afterwards tutor in Manchester College, York. His brother, the Rev. John Hincks, 1827-31. Rev. John Hamilton Thom, 1831-67 (with an interval of three years from 1854, during which time the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. W. H. Channing). Rev. Charles Beard, B.A., the present minister.

death. There is a gravestone close by the south entrance to the chapel which shows that members of the family were still there during the second half of the eighteenth century, among them Samuel Angier, M.D., Ob. — 1767 (?).

Oliver Heywood married, in 1655, Elizabeth, daughter of John Angier, of Denton, and in the year following his brother-in-law, John Angier the younger, returned from a sojourn in New England, bringing back a wife with him. The Samuel whom we are considering may have been the son of this latter, and grandson of old John, of Denton, which would make him Heywood's nephew, and also cousin to Samuel Angier, of Dukinfield, who was nephew to old John.

In 1687, Heywood speaks of a Samuel Angier, whom, however, he calls cousin, who was ordained with his own son and some others at his house at Northowram, near Halifax. This was not Samuel of Dukinfield, whose ordination, in 1672, at the house of Mr. Robert Eaton, in Deansgate, Manchester, Heywood also mentions as the first Presbyterian ordination among the Nonconformists in the north;* so if we may suppose that Heywood here speaks of his nephew as cousin, it will be the Samuel of Toxteth.

So also may have been the Samuel Angier who entered, in April, 1677, Mr. Frankland's academy at Natland, near Kendal, when he would have been 19 years old. Born, 1658; entered at Natland, 1677; ordained, 1687; died at Toxteth Park, 1698, must then be our account of this Samuel Angier. But was he minister of the Park Chapel? If so, it can only have been between the years 1695 and 1698,† when otherwise,

* See Hunter's *Life of Oliver Heywood*, pp. 244 and 353.

† Dr. Halley states (*Lancashire: its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, ii., p. 323), probably on the authority of Dr. Raffles, that on the com-

after Mr. Crompton's removal to Eccles, Richardson would have been sole minister. This seems not unlikely, but we cannot be certain, as Angier may have preached in Liverpool or have resided in Toxteth Park without any special charge.

There is no certainty in these conjectures, but chronology does not forbid them.

VI.

DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The list of ministers at the Park Chapel includes, during the eighteenth century, only four names. The first of these is John Kennion, who seems to have succeeded to the pulpit on Richardson's death in 1699, or a few years afterwards. He had been a pupil at Mr. Frankland's academy at Rathmel, where he entered January 9, 1691. Dr. Raffles speaks of him as "a man of finished education and polished manners, and withal an excellent preacher, so that the chapel was well attended during his ministry."* He was brother to an eminent physician in Liverpool, and the family seems to have remained in the neighbourhood, for in 1770 a John Kennion helped in the editing of "A Collection of Psalms proper for Christian Worship, made by Dr. W. Enfield," and in the present chapel there are tablets to John and Peter Kennion, ob. 1785 and

pletion of the Castle Hey Chapel, about 1688, Richardson gave up his connection with the Park, and confined his labours to the Liverpool congregation. In that case it would leave a longer period for Samuel Angier's ministry, from the year immediately after his ordination, at first as colleague to Mr. Crompton, and afterwards alone.

* Raffles' MS.

1788, who may have been descendants or connexions of his. John Kennion's ministry closed with his death in 1728, at the age of 55, when he was laid in the old graveyard, "The Rev. Mr. Jno. Kenion." His wife and son, and son's wife, were buried in the same grave.

He was succeeded by a Mr. Gellibrand, who was minister for only a few years, dying early of a decline. His name is added on the authority of Dr. Raffles, who speaks of him as "an amiable young man." He was not the Joseph Gellibrand who was for many years a popular preacher at St. Helen's, and who died in 1740.*

In 1737, William Harding became minister at Toxteth Park. He had been a pupil of Dr. Charles Owen's, at Warrington, and from the minutes of the Cheshire Classis of "United Brethren" (which were regularly kept from 1691 to 1745), we learn the following further particulars of his early life:—

"April, 1714, Mr. William Harding was examined, approved, and allowed to preach as a candidate by Mr. Risley and Mr. Owen, with whom he had then lived."

"The next meeting is to be, if the Lord will, upon the first Tuesday in August, 1716, and Mr. William Harding, who hath officiated at or near Middlewich for some time, is then to be ordained."

Aug, 7, 1716, there was a meeting at Knutsford :

"Mr. William Harding was then ordained. The evening before he exhibited his thesis and defended it. His question was: '*Quaenam est consecratio Eucharistiæ et qualis consecratio sit necessaria.*' The day following, viz., Aug, 7, in a very numerous assembly of ministers and people, met together in the new chapel, he was solemnly set apart to the office and work of the ministry.

* Halley's *Lancashire*, ii., p. 321.

The minister of the place began with prayer, and read some portions of Scripture. Then Mr. Waterhouse prayed before the sermon, which was preached by Mr. Fletcher, from Matthew v. 16, 'Let your light so shine, &c.' After sermon ended, Mr. Irlam called for the confession of his faith, which he made before the congregation, and then put the usual questions to him, to which he answered *verbis conceptis*, and so he was set apart by prayer and imposition of hands of Mr. Owen, who also prayed over him, Messrs. Irlam, Gardner, Fletcher, Waterhouse, Lea; then Mr. Owen gave the exhortation from 1 Tim. vi, 20, 'O, Timothy, keep that which, &c.,' so concluding with prayer, thanksgiving, singing and pronouncing the blessing, the congregation was dismissed."

Between the time of his ordination and his call to Toxteth Park he was minister at Partington. In 1731 his name is found attached to a Latin certificate of the ordination of Mr. Bond, of Stand.

With these facts before us, it is rather surprising to find Dr. Raffles (who is followed in the main by Dr. Halley*) stating that Harding was a man of no education or regular training for the ministry. The Cheshire ministers of those days were by no means indifferent to scholarship and proper attainments in those whom they admitted to ordination. Of Harding's preaching at Toxteth Park, Dr. Raffles makes the following statement:—"He was in the habit of reading his sermons, which are described as being long and tedious, seldom less than an hour and a-half, and so destitute of evangelical truth that no one could gather his theological sentiments from them. It is no marvel that under him the congregation 'should decline, and during the greater part of his ministry be very small.'"

It appears that many Presbyterian ministers in the

* *Lancashire*, ii. 457.

eighteenth century were not very definite in their theological teaching, and this may, not improbably, have set their ministry in a rather unfavourable light to men of stricter doctrine who came after them. That Mr. Harding also engaged in farming, and that, according to Dr. Halley, his daughters carried the milk and butter to Liverpool market, does not necessarily imply a failure in his ministry. When we hear of the congregation falling off during Mr. Harding's ministry, it must be remembered that Toxteth Park preserved its altogether rural character till 1771 (when the portion of it bordering on Liverpool was laid out for streets), and that in Liverpool there were now two other Dissenting congregations closely akin to that of the Park, one meeting in Benns Garden Chapel, where Dr. Enfield was minister part of the time (see p. 81), the other in the Key Street Chapel, built in 1707. In 1718 a meeting house was also built at Gateacre by Protestant Dissenters. In 1768 a third congregation was formed in Liverpool of "Presbyterians," who preferred a liturgical form of service. They built the Octagon Chapel, and occupied it till 1776, when it became the episcopal church of St. Catherine, and the congregation was absorbed into others in the town.* These chapels would

* See D. Thom's *Liverpool Churches and Chapels*, pp. 1, 5, and 60. The Key Street Chapel, which was opened for worship in 1707, was sold by the congregation in 1791, and became St. Matthew's Church. This was during the ministry of the Rev. John Yates, who removed with his people to a new chapel in Paradise Street. Mr. Yates, during the earlier portion of his ministry, received occasional assistance from two gentlemen who were successively tutors in his family—Mr. Benjamin Davies (afterwards minister at Walsall and Evesham) and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Shepherd, of Gateacre. In 1812 the Rev. Pendlebury Houghton was appointed co-pastor, and in 1823 both ministers resigned their charge. Mr. Houghton died in 1824; Mr. Yates in 1827. The Rev. John Grundy was minister at Paradise Street from 1823 to 1835.

naturally take away a good many of the families who in former times attended the old Park Chapel.

On Mr. Harding's death the prayer meetings were discontinued, which seem first to have been held secretly in the days before toleration. On the passing of the Toleration Act, in 1689, twelve houses had been licensed by the congregation, at which the meetings were held in rotation. Latterly they appear to have degenerated into "convivial meetings, in which drinking ale and smoking tobacco took the place of exhortation, psalm-singing, and prayer," so that they evidently died a natural death.* Mr. Harding died July 15, 1776, aged eighty-five, and was buried in the chapel burying-ground. Grandchildren of his were members of the congregation up to about the middle of the present century.

One sign of vitality in the congregation, towards the close of Mr. Harding's ministry, we find in the fact that in the year 1774 the chapel was rebuilt by voluntary subscription. The congregations of Benns Garden and Gateacre, and other places, contributed to the cost.

Dr. Raffles gives the following account of this rebuilding of the chapel:—"It first underwent considerable repairs, but these were scarcely completed when the walls began to give way, and it was found necessary entirely to rebuild it. So

From 1832 he had been assisted by the Rev. James Martineau, who, on the resignation of his senior, became sole minister. In 1849 the congregation moved into Hope Street Church. In 1857, Dr. Martineau resigned the pulpit on his removal to London. Subsequent ministers at Hope Street have been the Rev. W. H. Channing, from 1857 to 1861; the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, B.A., and the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., from 1863 to 1872; the Rev. E. M. Geldart, M.A., from 1873 to 1876; the Rev. C. J. Perry, B.A., from 1878 to his lamented death in October, 1883.

* Raffles' MS.

much had the building been neglected that, prior to the first repairs, bushes actually grew out of the walls and within the pews. After the completion of these repairs some incendiaries endeavoured to burn it down, but the combustibles which they had placed in one of the seats for that purpose happily did not ignite, though matches which had evidently been alight were found among them." There is a statement of Josh. Mercer and W. Lassell's (1808) about the old chapel:—"It was originally built of rough stone, set in clay. In 1774 its state was such that it was fixed on by the Trustees to take it all down and rebuild it." The old tombs in the Chapel show that the original site was retained.

The only other approach to a description of the old chapel that I have been able to find is in a deposition made in 1888 by John and Thomas Dickinson, with reference to the school-house, preserved among the congregational papers. These two remembered being sent as boys to the old school-house adjoining the Toxteth Chapel. Occasionally the burial of a member of the congregation took place in the school-house, on which occasion the boys of course had a holiday.*

They state that the old chapel stood about on the site of the present building, but that the south gallery was approached only by means of stone steps outside the chapel, and the north gallery by a wooden staircase passing up through the school-house.

* The last burial of this kind took place in 1835, of Miss Elizabeth Kennion, when, in the absence of the minister, Dr. Raffles, of Great George Street, conducted the service in the chapel, and the coffin was carried through the vestry into the school-room, where the vault had been opened.

There is also an old plan of the chapel in 1778, which confirms this statement. From this it appears that approaching from Liverpool along the lane, which is now Park Road, you came first to an entrance porch, and passed through this into the school-room, where there was the staircase up to the north gallery, and also an entrance into the chapel downstairs. It seems that the old school-house was pulled down before the end of last century, and a more elaborate building erected. There is a plan of this made in 1885 by Charles Whiteside, the last master. The entrance was in the middle of the building facing Park Road, on the left were the master's apartments, on the right the schoolrooms, the boys downstairs, the girls on the first floor. At the south end of the school-room was a door leading into the vestry of the chapel, but the chapel itself was now approached directly from Park Road by a new porch. A new staircase leading up to the north gallery was also built inside the chapel. It is not clear whether the whole of the outer structure of the chapel built in 1774 was new or not, but there is a stone over one of the lower windows bearing the date 1650, and some of the old woodwork was retained, notably the door of the Mather pew, with its carved inscription "D. 1650 M." There is an old bell also, which still announces to the congregation the times of service. Tradition, with amusing unlikelihood, ascribed the gift of this bell to Oliver Cromwell. I regret to say that I have mounted the roof and invaded the solitude of our old friend. He claims only to have been born in 1751. There is no further inscription, only the date in old-fashioned figures forming part of an ornamented ring about the upper part of the bell.

VII.

MINISTRY OF THE REV. HUGH ANDERSON.

The death of Mr. Harding marks an important point of transition in the history of the Toxteth Park congregation. It appears that the deceased minister had not been altogether orthodox, or at any rate had not been very definite in his doctrinal teaching on some points. On his death the majority of the congregation, leaning to broader views than those of their forefathers, chose the Rev. Hugh Anderson to be their minister, feeling that his services would be in harmony with their convictions. Some members of the congregation, however, still holding to stricter Calvinistic views, seceded, and in 1777 built the Newington chapel, which is now the German church in Renshaw Street.*

Mr. Anderson (who was born in 1746, and came to Liverpool from Galloway, N.B.) was ordained in Key Street chapel on October 1st, 1777, together with the Rev. John Yates, who was then just entering on the ministry of the chapel.†

* The Newington congregation had for their first minister David Bruce, who died in 1808. In 1811, Thomas Spencer accepted their call to the pulpit, and in the same year laid the foundation stone of a new chapel in Great George Street. On his unfortunate death by drowning, the Rev. Thomas Raffles took his place, and in 1812 removed with the congregation into the new chapel. In 1840 the present Great George Street Chapel was built, its predecessor having been destroyed by fire.

† Mr. Yates ministered at Key Street, and from 1791 in Paradise Street Chapel till 1823, when he retired. He died in 1826, and was buried in the Ancient Chapel ground. Dr. Shepherd, of Gateacre,

On that occasion a sermon was preached by Dr. Enfield, and afterwards published, with the charge by the Rev. Richard Godwin, of Gateacre. His association with these three men who are rightly numbered among the fathers of English Unitarianism, sufficiently marks the position which Mr. Anderson from the first took up, and it is difficult to believe the statement repeated by Dr. Halley, after Dr. Raffles,* that he had said to the dissatisfied minority, "If the people would only agree about their doctrine, and let him know what it was, he would gladly preach it." Or if he did say anything of the sort, it very likely was as a *reductio ad impossibile* to the demand of the bigots in a notoriously divided congregation.

Mr. Anderson's is the longest ministry in connection with the Park Chapel. He remained in sole charge till 1827, a period of fifty years, and after that took occasional duty at baptisms and funerals till within a year of his death, in April, 1882.

This long ministry has unfortunately become to some extent a mythical period in the history of the chapel, owing to the absence of any contemporary narrative of events. It was the period in which the question was decided whether the Presbyterians, who, like so many of their brethren throughout the country, had developed doctrinally into Unitarians, should retain possession of their Meeting House, or whether it should pass into the hands of the Independents. What exactly took place cannot be recorded for want of sufficient material, but the following definite and all-important facts remain, that the

preached the funeral sermon. Mr. Yates was born in 1755 at Bolton-le-Moors, and educated there and at the Warrington Academy. See *Monthly Repository*, January, 1827.

* Halley's *Lancashire*, ii., p. 459.

continuity of congregational life was unbroken, that in the year 1827, Mr. Anderson, who had freehold possession of the chapel, granted it to Timothy Jevons and others,* on trust, "for a place of divine worship and public religious instruction for Protestant dissenters," and that at that time the congregation was distinctly Unitarian in its theological position, and has remained so to this day.

In the trust-deed of 1827 there is no reference to any former deed, and I have not been able to discover that any ever existed. In the register of Lord Sefton's property, in the year 1718, the Park chapel and school-house are mentioned as being in the possession of John Kenyon, the minister, and William Huddershall, the master, respectively, which buildings "they hold as tenants at will without any rent;" and towards the close of the century another Lord Sefton gave to the congregation an additional piece of land to enlarge their burial-ground. But if the property was ever formally put into the hands of trustees before 1827, all trace of the fact, so far as I know, has been lost.

At the beginning of this century, Mr. Anderson was not left in undisturbed possession of his chapel; gentlemen connected with more "orthodox" Dissent in the town, who, themselves or their fathers, had belonged to the seceders of 1777, conceived that they had a right to the chapel, and used every means in their power to establish an "orthodox" minister in the pulpit. Of those struggles no record has been preserved; there are traditions still lingering about the chapel of incidents in which a comical side was certainly not absent,—of Dr. Raffles and his

* The following is the first list of trustees:—Timothy Jevons, R. V. Yates, Thomas Jevons, T. Mather, jun., W. H. Tayleur, Sam. Holland, jun., Edw. Fletcher, R. A. Fletcher, Josh. Waring.

deacons driving up in a cab early one morning to take possession of the chapel for the "orthodox," but only to find the Rev. John Yates already in the pulpit, arrayed in gown and bands, brought there through the faithful watchfulness of the sexton, who had sat up in the chapel all night with locked doors ; of a member of the "orthodox" party suspended in mid-air, trying to effect an entrance into the chapel through one of the windows ; of a siege of the school-house, when the inmates, or some intruders sympathising with "orthodoxy," had barricaded themselves in, and the door was battered down, and they forcibly ejected by members of the congregation,—traditions of strange times, of how much truth or likelihood I cannot say. But undoubtedly there was an honest conviction on both sides that they had the right of possession, though their methods of argument appear to have been somewhat curious.

There were, however, certain possessions of the congregation which have now passed into other hands.

In the early years of last century various sums of money were left for the benefit of the minister of the chapel and the poor of the neighbourhood. Other sums, derived from burial fees, were appropriated to the same purposes. In 1762, Daniel Mather paid for a long trust-deed relating to these various sums.

At the beginning of this century, the acting trustees, having been among the seceders of 1777, refused to pay the interest to Mr. Anderson, because he did not preach the doctrines of the Church of England, and there were long disputes about the right and wrong of the matter. About 1827 this small endowment, amounting to about £12 per annum, was finally withdrawn from the Park Chapel, and for some years altogether alienated from the neighbourhood. In 1859 the matter was submitted for legal decision, and since the deeds required of the recipient

adherence to the doctrinal Articles of the Church of England, the case was decided as being out of the scope of the Dissenters' Chapels Act of 1844, and the endowment divided between two "orthodox" congregations in Toxteth Park.

I mention this matter particularly, because the trustees of this endowment, at the beginning of the century, speak of themselves as trustees of the chapel, and so claim a right to interfere with its management, contrary to the wishes of the minister and congregation. But Mr. Anderson repeatedly denies that they are trustees of the chapel, and challenges them to produce the trust-deed, which they appear never to have done. But if they had really possessed a trust-deed of a definite doctrinal kind, they surely would have made active use of it in furtherance of their object to establish an orthodox minister in the pulpit.

The conclusion I have come to is that there was no trust-deed of the chapel before 1827; and that when in correspondence and other notes before that date trustees of the chapel are mentioned, it is a mistake arising from confusion with the trustees of the endowment.

Towards the close of his long ministry, Mr. Anderson grew feeble, and the congregation declined very much. But they successfully maintained their right to possession of the chapel, which they inherited, as the continuing descendants of the old Nonconformist congregation. In their change of views they only exercised that right of private judgment and liberty of growth in matters of opinion which they had received from their fathers.

VIII.

UNITARIAN MINISTERS OF THE ANCIENT CHAPEL.

After Mr. Anderson's half-century of connection with the Park Chapel, there followed a succession of short ministries of young men, who passed on to wider fields of labour.

In 1827 the Rev. John Porter was chosen colleague to Mr. Anderson, but was, practically, sole minister, Mr. Anderson being now too infirm to do anything but officiate occasionally at a baptism or funeral. Mr. Porter was born in the year 1800, the son of James Porter of Lough Muck, County Tyrone, and cousin of the Rev. J. Scott Porter. In 1829 he became minister of the second Presbyterian congregation in Belfast. He died in February, 1874. To him succeeded at the Ancient Chapel the Rev. John Hamilton Thom, son of the Rev. John Thom, Presbyterian minister at Newry, in Ireland.

"Of the fathers who are still with us, write no biography," is a principle nearly always good to be observed. But not long ago Mr. Thom himself gave us at least one glimpse of his early life, which I cannot refrain from reproducing here. At the Liverpool meeting, in connection with the Channing Centenary, on April 21st, 1880, speaking of the first effect of Channing's writings on this side of the Atlantic, he said: "I remember it. I remember a sense as of being new-born. I cannot speak worthily of Channing, but I can acknowledge my debt. Others had taught me much; no one before had unsealed the fountain in myself. He was the first to touch the spring of living water, which made me independent even of myself. That is an

obligation never to be forgotten ; with which none other can compare. I speak of myself, as among the first on this side of the ocean to receive the impact of his mind, only to illustrate what he was to so many ; the opener of a new religious life, not as the founder of a school, but as the destroyer of all schools except the school of the spirit. About 1825, fifty-five years ago, I was living a severe but salutary life in the north of Ireland, little more than a boy, teaching seven hours a day in the great classical school of the Belfast Royal Institution, and for the rest of the working day going through my college course as a student under the professors, whose lecture rooms were in another department of the same building. I was living familiarly with scholars, of a race of scholars, the Bruces and the Hinckses, admirable and venerable men, walking in the light of their own convictions straight as a line, though, perhaps, rather as devout servants under the Old Covenant than as dear children under the New. They were Arians ; the only preaching I had heard up to that time was Arian, and Arianism being then upon its trial, about to be disowned, and cast out by the Presbyterianism of Ulster, was, as a learned school, making its appeal to external and textual foundations, not having, not knowing that it had, the predominant spring of its being in what may be briefly set forth as the one distinctive note, the root principle of Channing's Christianity—that all souls are of one Family. I remember how that light first came to me, and set me free for ever ; nor have I a more vivid recollection than of turning for a moment from weary work to steal a glance at the tract on Milton's treatise on " Christian Doctrine," which the postman had just laid upon my school-desk ; and of being carried out of myself and my surroundings by its first lofty words."

As a disciple of Channing, then, Mr. Thom entered upon his ministry at Toxteth Park ; and it may, perhaps, be truly said of all the subsequent ministers of the chapel, that they have owed a good part of their insight into the Christian gospel, directly or indirectly, to the influence of the same teacher.

On the death of the Rev. John Hincks, of Renshaw Street Chapel, in 1881, Mr. Thom was called to be his successor ; and, with an interval of three years from 1854, continued his ministry there till 1867.

Some of the writings which have been part of the fruit of Mr. Thom's life-work may here be mentioned. In 1832 he edited, with a memoir, a volume of sermons by his predecessor in the Renshaw Street pulpit. In 1839 came the famous "Liverpool Controversy" with thirteen clergymen of the Church of England, in which he was associated with the Revs. James Martineau, and Henry Giles in the work of defending the Unitarian position. On the death of the Rev. Joseph Blanco White, in 1841, Mr. Thom was the editor of his "Memoirs," as afterwards of the Letters of the Rev. John James Tayler, who died in 1869. For six years the editor of the new series of the *Christian Teacher*, and from 1845 to 1855, joint-editor of its successor, the *Prospective Review*, Mr. Thom contributed largely to these, and to the later National and Theological Reviews. He also published in 1851 a Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians ; and in 1859 a small volume of sermons entitled "Christ the Revealer." The latter volume was reprinted in 1879 by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, with two essays added from the *Theological Review*, on "The Doctrine of an Eternal Son," and on Prayer. In 1888, we received a fresh gift in another volume of sermons, "Laws of Life after the Mind of Christ."

Both congregations to whom Mr. Thom ministered still enjoy the privilege of his frequent presence at their services.

From 1881 to 1885 the pulpit of the Ancient Chapel was occupied by the Rev. Charles Wicksteed, B.A. On his removal in the latter year to Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds, the Rev. Henry Giles took his place at Toxteth Park. In 1889, Mr. Giles was engaged in the "Liverpool Controversy," above referred to, but resigned his pulpit in that same year, and early in 1840 sailed for the United States. There he was well known as a popular lecturer. The following is a list of his published works:—*Essays and Lectures*, 2 vols., 1850, containing, among others, lectures on Goldsmith, Byron, Ebenezer Elliott, Crabbe, Chatterton, Carlyle, and on True Manhood, Patriotism, Music, Economics; "*Christian Thought on Life*," 1850, afterwards re-published in London; "*Illustrations of Genius*," 1854, "*Human Life in Shakespeare*" (lectures before the Lowell Institute), 1868. These were all published in Boston, Mass. "*Lectures and Essays on Irish and other subjects*," New York, 1869, mostly new matter, and not a reprint of the volumes of 1850. Mr. Giles died in 1882, at the age of 78.

The Rev. John Robberds, B.A., was minister at the Park from 1840 to 1867. In December, 1840, Charles Whiteside resigned his position of schoolmaster, "from infirmity and losing all his scholars," after having held the post for thirty-seven years. In the year following the old school-house was pulled down, and the present north front, with vestry and library attached, was added. About the same time a considerable piece of land adjoining the old burial-ground was bought by Mr. Richard Vaughan Yates, a member of the congregation, and laid out as a garden cemetery. This ground is now held by trustees

separate from those of the chapel, and is retained for the use of the members of the Liverpool Unitarian congregations.

About 1861 the chapel underwent thorough internal repair, and from that date may be regarded as having borne its present appearance.

In 1867, Mr. Robberds was succeeded by the Rev. Charles Barnes Upton, B.A., B.Sc., and he, on his removal to London in 1875, as Professor of Philosophy in Manchester New College, by the Rev. James Harwood, B.A. In 1878 the church at Monton called Mr. Harwood, and the Rev. J. E. Odgers, M.A., succeeded him at Toxteth Park. In 1882, Mr. Odgers removed to Altrincham, and at the beginning of 1888 the writer of these pages entered upon his duties as minister at the Ancient Chapel.

IX.

MEMORIALS OF THE DEAD.

Having now given what account I was able of the succession of ministers at the Ancient Chapel, and of the fortunes of the congregation, it remains to mention the memorials of the dead, which help to keep fresh in the minds of the living worshippers many beautiful and honourable associations in connection with this place.

Although the present chapel, as before stated (p. 88), was built in 1774, it contains memorials of a much earlier time. On the stone covering of a vault in the main aisle is a small brass, with the following inscription :—

“ Edward Aspinwall, of Tocksteth Park, Esquire, Departed this life in March the Twenty-ninth, A.D. 1656. It is sown a naturall,

it is raised a spirituall, body ; for this corruptible must put on incorruption ; so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. 1 Cor. chap. xv. verse : xlv. liii. liv."

This was not improbably the Edward Aspinwall with whom Richard Mather lodged when he first came as schoolmaster to Toxteth Park (see p. 10).

Close by is the grave of the Rev. John Brekell, who died December 28, 1769, aged 78. He was the second minister of the old Key Street Chapel, having become assistant to Christopher Basnett in 1780, and in 1744 sole minister.

Other gravestones on the floor of the chapel are of Richard Hampson (died 1748, aged 65), Alice, relict of James Lawton (died 1751 or 1754, aged 77), and John Mavon or Haven (died 1778).

The old pew of the Mathers, on the minister's right hand, has already been mentioned (p. 40). The family vault is below, and on the wall is a brass, with the following inscription :—

"Near this wall rest the remains of several generations of an ancient family of yeomanry, named Mather, who were settled in Toxteth Park as early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They were distinguished by many virtues and by strong religious feeling, and were among the fairest specimens of those who in former times were called Puritans. Not least so was their representative, Daniel Mather, a member of this congregation, born 6 of Oct., 1723 ; died 30 of June, 1782 : Isabel, his excellent wife, daughter of Edward Turner, of Grange, in Cartmel, born 9 of October, 1723, and died 15 of December, 1801, is also here interred. They had 9 children, of whom Ann, the last of the family laid in this grave, was born 29 of April, 1762, and died 22 of August, 1826. Let this brass also bear the name of Sarah, the youngest of these children. She was born in the ancient house of the family, and there died on

the 2d of April, 1850, at the age of 80, being the oldest member of this congregation, and was interred at the chapel in Renshaw Street, in Liverpool; where rest also her sisters, Elizabeth, Mary and Hannah, with her brother, Thomas Mather, of Mount Pleasant, in Liverpool, whose 2d son, John Mather, has here placed this tablet, in grateful remembrance of these his worthy Nonconforming ancestors, A.D. 1852."

On the same wall, on the other side of the pulpit, is a tablet of white marble, erected by Dr. Dobson, a Liverpool physician and author, to the memory of his daughter, who, when she was only seventeen, "quietly passed on to heaven." The simple pathos and tenderness of the Latin inscription can hardly be given again in English :—

" Abiit
Dilecta mea filia
Elisa !
Pulchra, Jucunda, Benigna,
Mea Filia abiit !
Ingenua perquam et perquam acuta
Bonis artibus et studiis honestis ornata
Sancta et Religiosa
Mea Filia abiit !
Vale, mea Elisa, vale !
Te diu desiderandam luget pater :
Desiderandam, sed, Deo Optimo gratias, non amissam :
Nam veniet fel(i)cior ætas
Quando iterum, mea filia, te aspiciam,
Et tecum sempiternæ vivam.
Matthæus Dobson, caræ, dulci et beatæ suæ Elisæ,
Quæ annos Septendecim nata,
Et A.D. 1778
In cælum placide migravit."

Other tablets in the chapel are to the memory of Joseph rocks Yates (died 1855, aged 75), George Brown (1768—

1839). Elizabeth Collier (died 1815, aged 50), John Kennion, collector of customs in Liverpool (died 1785, aged 59), Alice Kennion, relict of John Kennion (died 1813, aged 88), Hugh Pringle (died 1784, aged 68). The last tablet erected is in the centre of the wall, opposite the pulpit. The inscription speaks for itself:—

“ Sacred to the memory of Anna Maria, born 1787, died 1866, and of Jane Ellen, born 1794, died 1877, daughters of the Rev. John Yates, of the Dingle, Texteth Park.

“ Sisters in natural affection and in the nearer fellowship of Christian love and service, they distributed as tender and considerate stewards the wealth committed to their trust. Generous and hospitable to all, but chiefly to those most needing kindness, truly may it be said that they followed the example of their Saviour, and lived for others rather than themselves. This tablet is erected by their neices in affectionate remembrance.”

In the old school-house there were graves of the families of Kennion, Lassel, Fleetwood and Whitfield. Tablets of the Whitfield and Kennion families are now in the entrance to the chapel.

Among the graves in the old burial-ground adjoining the chapel may be mentioned those of the Rev. John Kennion (died 1728), Rev. William Harding (died 1776), and Rev. Hugh Anderson (died 1882), former ministers of the chapel.

By the south door of the chapel is a stone bearing the names of several members of the Angier family in the eighteenth century, and close by is the grave of the Rev. John Yates (died 1826) and eight members of his family. The Rev. Robert Lewin was also buried near the south end of the chapel. On his grave is this inscription:—

“ Hallowed to the memory of Robert Lewin, nearly half a

century minister of the congregation of Benns Garden Chapel. Born in London, Aug. 14, 1739, died Jan. 15, 1825."

Besides these there were buried in the old ground members of many Nonconformist families, formerly well known in the neighbourhood, and several of them still represented by living members. Among them will be found the names of Mather, Kenyon, Mercer, Andrews, Brooks. There are the graves of William Lassell (died 1816, aged 80), Thomas Holt (died 1845, aged 72), Francis Boulton (1779-1848), William Hall (1778-1852).

In the new ground first acquired by Mr. Richard Yates his own remains were afterwards laid. There is a range of vaults, covered by a corridor with open arches, along a portion of the outer border of the ground, and facing the old chapel. A marble tablet over one of these, erected by his sisters, bears the following inscription :—

" Sacred to the Memory
of

Richard Vaughan Yates,

Third son of the late Rev. John Yates.

" He held nothing as his own, but, in stewardship to God, devoted his time, his means, and himself to a conscientious self-discipline and to the happiness and improvement of man.

" Touched by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, he was never weary of well-doing, but in the simplicity of an humble, cheerful, and childlike heart, pursued his faithful way, unheeding the judgments of the world.

" With firm attachment to his views of Christian truth he blended universal charity; and whilst as a citizen and magistrate, he shrank from no civic strife on behalf of just laws and free institutions, he better loved the promise of peace on earth and goodwill to men.

" Monuments of his benevolence remain. In the Harrington

School he taught weekly the children of the poor. In the Liverpool Institute he contributed munificently to the instruction of all classes. He gave the Prince's Park for the enjoyment of the people.

"Whilst exercising the largest public spirit, he freely ministered to private sorrow. Not willingly would he let his right hand know what his left hand was doing. But his goodness could not be hid, and he found the honour that he did not seek.

"Born August 4th, 1785. Died November 30th, 1856."

On a gravestone hard by may be read the following touching lines :—

" In Memory of
Herbert,
Son of
James and Helen Martineau,
Aged 10 years.
O Life too fair ! upon thy brow
We saw the light where thou art now.
O Death too sad ! in thy deep shade
All but our sorrow seemed to fade.
O Heaven too rich ! not long detain
Thine exiles from the sight again.
Born August 14, 1835 ;
Died March 28, 1846."

During the last forty years this beautiful garden cemetery has been the resting-place of what was mortal of many men whose names are held in honour among the churches of the Liberal Faith. Among them are Robert Fletcher (died 1849, aged 72), Samuel Holland (died 1851, aged 88), James Rawdon (died 1855, aged 78), Christopher Rawdon (died 1858, aged 78), Richard Rathbone (died 1860, aged 72), George Holt (died 1861, aged 71), Henry Booth (died 1869, aged 80), Samuel Bright (died 1870, aged 70), William Jevons (died

1878, aged 79), Timothy Jevons (died 1874, aged 76), William James Lamport (died 1874, aged 59), Thomas Avison (died 1879, aged 68). Not all members, these, of the congregation meeting in the Ancient Chapel, but all upholders of the same principles of liberty and reverent faith, all members of one or other of the congregations which in Liverpool hold the Unitarian position, and claim that it is nearest to the mind of Christ, and best for the culture of integrity and true religious life.

The times have changed since Richard Mather first preached the word of life to the Toxteth congregation ; but the needs of the human heart remain the same. Our conception of the Gospel may be very different from his, but the reverence for truth, and the endeavour after Christian life, remain the same ; and before God the difference will not seem so great as in the sight of men. The thought of the devotion of every succeeding generation, from the first gathering of the church, must help to kindle our hearts to prayer. And now, in this old meeting-house, venerable in its history and its sacred memories, we have a place of quiet retreat that may well call us to rest from time to time in the Divine presence, and remember the things that do not change.

The fathers have run their earthly course. Here is the last resting-place of the mortal. And here may come into the heart that sense of the immortal which still unites us to the Unseen, and is the final and best gift of Divine love.

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